SHELLEY'S PROMETHEUS

UNBOUND

PATON

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THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

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Compositions

FROM

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SHELLEY'S PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

TWELVE ENGRAVINGS IN OUTLINE.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

BY

109519

SIR J. NOEL PATON.

WILLIAM P. NIMMO,
LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

MDCCCLXXVII.

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COMPOSITIONS

FROM SHELLEY'S PROMETHEVS VNBOVND.

BY J. NOEL PATON.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

TO

MRS PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY,

THESE COMPOSITIONS

FROM THE "PROMETHEUS UNBOUND" OF HER IMMORTAL HUSBAND

ARE, WITH HER PERMISSION, DEDICATED

By the Author:

WHOSE CONSCIOUSNESS OF INABILITY ALONE RESTRAINS HIM FROM ATTEMPTING TO CLOTHE
IN "THE GREY VEIL OF HIS OWN WORDS,"
THE ADMIRATION DUE TO HER GENIUS AND WORTH,
NOT LESS JUSTLY THAN TO THE WONDROUS ENDOWMENTS OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD.

PLATE I.

ACT I.

PANTHEA.

'Tis Jove's world-wandering herald, Mercury.

IONE.

And who are those, with hydra tresses
And iron wings, that climb the wind,
Whom the frowning God represses
Like vapours steaming up behind,
Clanging loud, an endless crowd? . . . .

PANTHEA.

These are Jove's tempest-walking hounds,
Whom he gluts with groans and blood,
When charioted on sulphurous cloud
He bursts Heaven's bounds.

FIRST FURY.

Darest thou delay, O Herald! Take cheer, Hounds
Of Hell! What if the son of Maia soon
Should make us food and sport—who can please long
The Omnipotent?

MERCURY.

Back to your towers of iron,
And gnash beside the streams of fire, and wail
Your foodless teeth.

Act I.

J. N. PATON, DEL. ET SC.

PLATE II.

ACT I.

PANTHEA.

Look, sister, where a troop of spirits gather,
Like flocks of clouds in spring's delightful weather,
Thronging in the blue air!

IONE.

And, see! more come,
Like fountain-vapours when the winds are dumb,
That climb up the ravine in scattered lines.
And, hark! Is it the music of the pines?
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

PANTHEA.

'Tis something sadder, sweeter far than all.

Chorus of Spirits.

From unremembered ages we
Gentle guides and guardians be
Of heaven-oppress'd mortality:
And we breathe, and sicken not,
The atmosphere of human thought;
Be it dim, and dank, and grey,
Like a storm-extinguish'd day,
Travell'd o'er by dying gleams:
Be it bright as all between
Cloudless skies, and windless streams,
Silent, liquid, and serene;
As the birds within the wind,
As the fish within the wave,
As the thoughts of man's own mind
Float through all above the grave;
We make these our liquid lair,
Voyaging cloud-like and unpent
Through the boundless element:
Whence we bear the prophecy
Which begins and ends in thee!

Act I.

PLATE III.

ACT II. SCENE I.

PANTHEA.

The crags, this clear spring morning, mock our voices,
As they were spirit-tongued.

ASIA.

It is some being
Around the crags. What fine, clear sounds! O, list!

ECHOES (*unseen*).

Echoes we: listen!
We cannot stay:
As dew-stars glisten
Then fade away—
Child of Ocean!

ASIA.

Hark! spirits speak. The liquid responses
Of their aërial tongues yet sound.

PANTHEA.

I hear.

ECHOES.

Oh, follow, follow,
As our voice recedeth.
Through the caverns hollow,
Where the forest spreadeth.
(*More distant.*) Oh, follow, follow,
Through the caverns hollow;
As the song floats thou pursue,
Where the wild bee never flew,
Through the noon-tide darkness deep,
By the odour-breathing sleep
Of faint night-flowers, and the waves,
At the fountain-lighted caves,
While our music, wild and sweet,
Mocks thy gently-falling feet,
Child of Ocean!

ASIA.

Shall we pursue the sound? It grows more faint
And distant.

PANTHEA.

List! the strain floats nearer now.

ASIA.

Come, sweet Panthea, link thy hand in mine,
And follow, ere the voices fade away.

Act II. Scene I.

J. N. PATON, DEL. ET SC.

PLATE IV.

ACT II. SCENE II.

A Forest, intermingled with Rocks and Caverns. ASIA *and* PANTHEA *pass into it. Two young Fauns are sitting on a Rock, listening.*

Semichorus of Spirits.

The path through which that lonely twain
Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,
And each dark tree that ever grew,
Is curtain'd out from Heaven's wide blue;
Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain
Can pierce its interwoven bowers. . . .

FIRST FAUN.

Canst thou imagine where those spirits live
Which make such delicate music in the woods?
We haunt within the least-frequented caves
And closest coverts, and we know these wilds,
Yet never meet them, though we hear them oft:
Where may they hide themselves?

SECOND FAUN.

'Tis hard to tell.
I have heard those more skill'd in spirits say,
The bubbles, which the enchantment of the sun
Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers that pave
The oozy bottom of clear lakes and pools,
Are the pavilions where such dwell and float,
Under the green and golden atmosphere
Which noon-tide kindles through the woven leaves;
And when these burst and the thin fiery air,
The which they breathed within those lucent domes,
Ascends to flow like meteors through the night,
They ride on them, and rein their headlong speed,
And bow their burning crests, and glide in fire
Under the waters of the earth again.

Pl. 4.

J.M. PATON DEL. ET SC.

Act. II. Scene II.

PLATE V.

ACT II. SCENE IV.

ASIA.

The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night
I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds,
Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands
A wild-eyed charioteer, urging their flight.
Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,
And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:
Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink
With eager lips the wind of their own speed,
As if the thing they loved fled on before,
And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright locks
Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all
Sweep onward.

DEMOGORGON.

These are the immortal Hours,
Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.

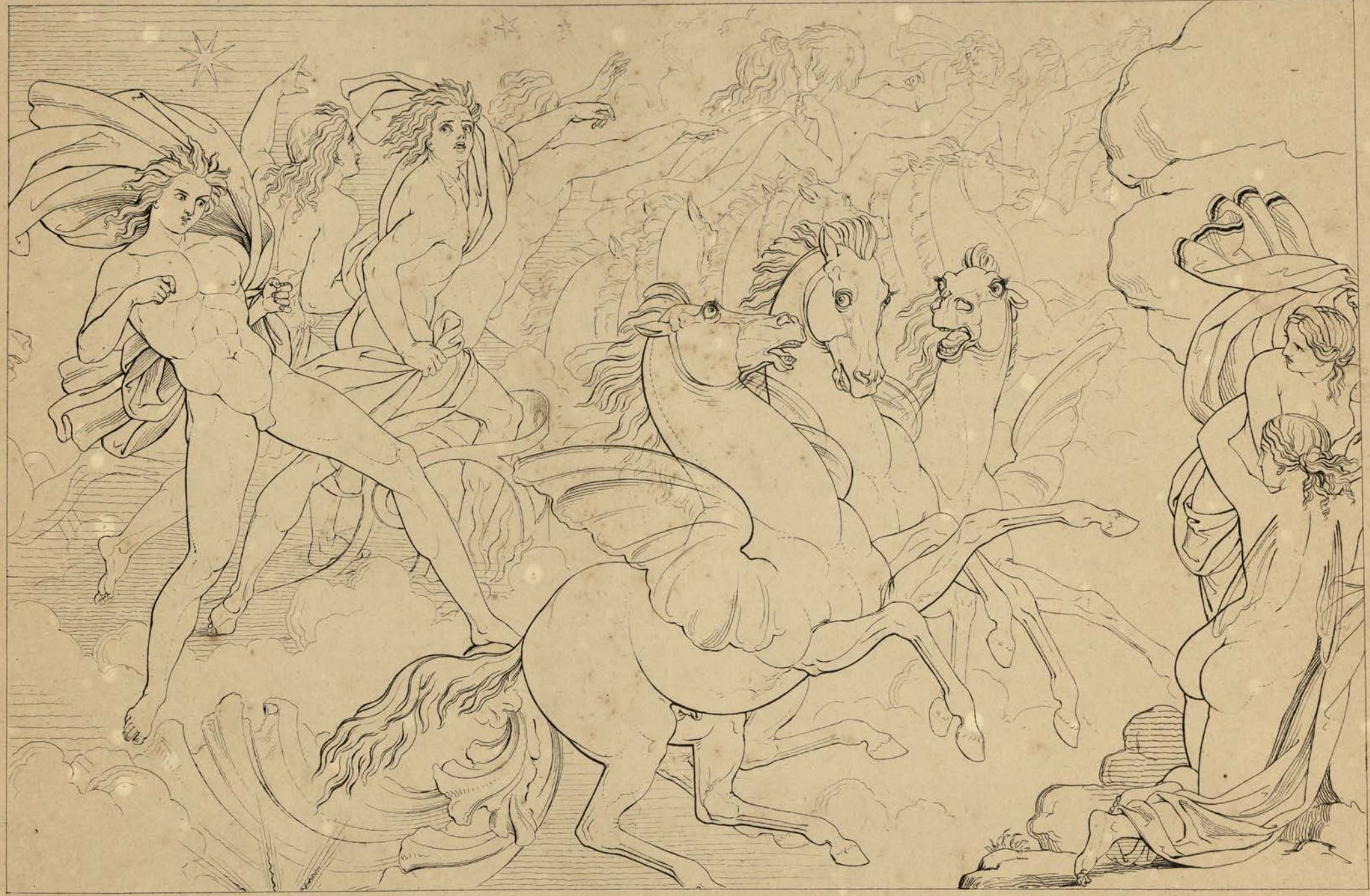
* * * * *

PANTHEA.

See, near the verge, another chariot stays;
An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,
Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim
Of delicate strange tracery: the young spirit
That guides it has the dove-like eyes of Hope;
How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light
Lures wing'd insects through the lampless air.

SPIRIT.

My coursers are fed with the lightning,
They drink of the whirlwind's stream,
And when the red morning is bright'ning,
They bathe in the fresh sunbeam:
They have strength for their swiftness, I deem;
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.



Act II. Scene IV.

J.N. PATON DEL. ET SC.

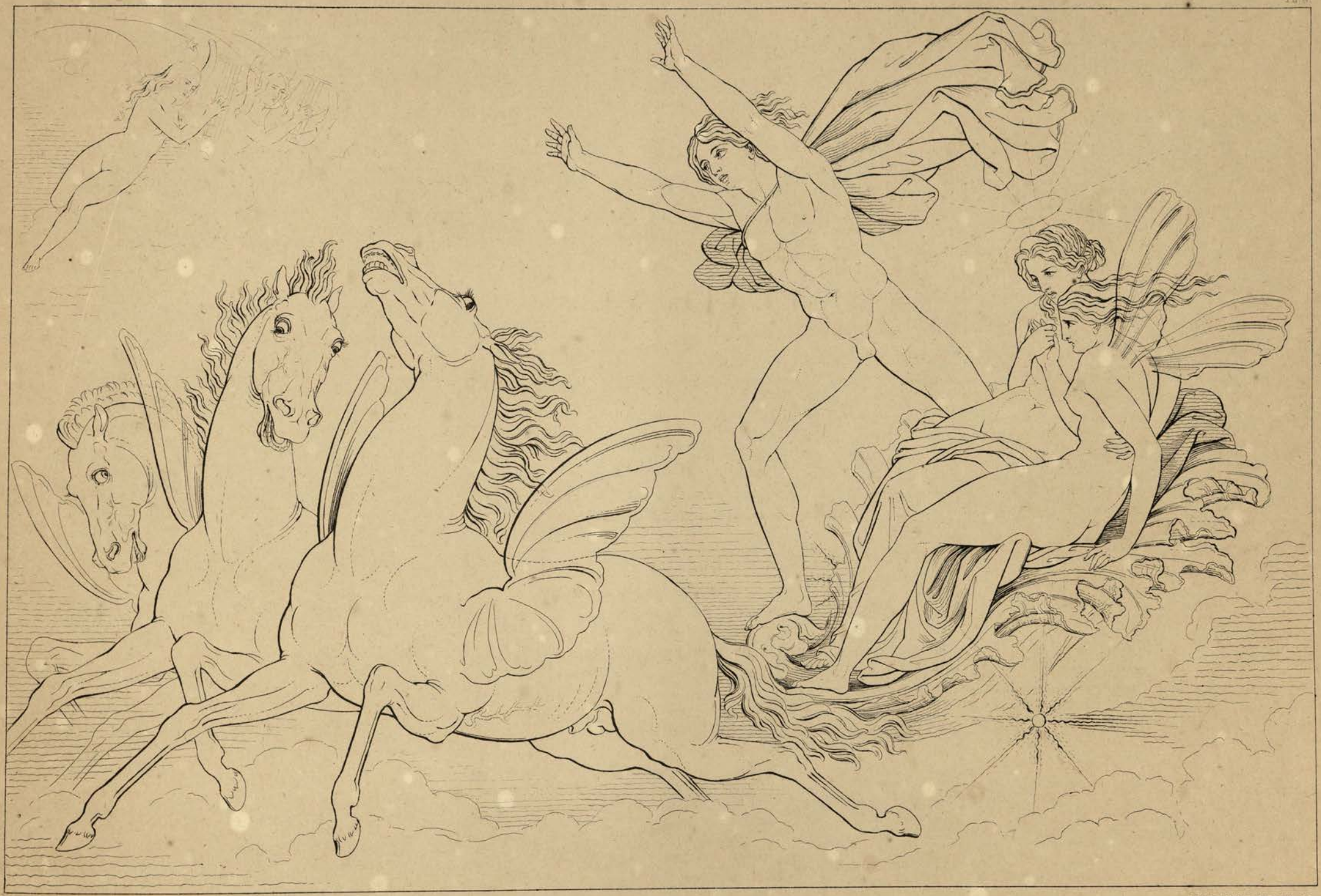
PLATE VI.

ACT II. SCENE V.

ASIA, PANTHEA, *and the* SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.

SPIRIT.

On the brink of the night and the morning
My coursers are wont to respire;
But the Earth has just whispered a warning
That their flight must be swifter than fire:
They shall drink the hot speed of desire!



Act II. Scene V.

J.N. PATON, DEL. ET SC.

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PLATE VII.

ACT II. SCENE V.

PANTHEA.

The Nereids tell,
That on the day when the clear hyaline
Was cloven at the uprise, and thou didst stand
Within a veinèd shell, which floated on
Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,
Among the Ægean isles, and by the shores
Which bear thy name; Love, like the atmosphere
Of the sun's fire filling the living world,
Burst from thee, and illumined earth and heaven,
And the deep ocean, and the sunless caves,
And all that dwells within them.

Act II. Scene V.

J. N. PATON, DEL: ET SC:

PLATE VIII.

ACT III. SCENE I.

JUPITER.

Let hell unlock
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire,
And whelm on them into the bottomless void
This desolated world, and thee, and me,
The conqueror and the conquer'd, and the wreck
Of that for which they combated.
Ai! Ai!
The elements obey me not. I sink
Dizzily down—ever, for ever, down!
And, like a cloud, mine enemy above
Darkens my fall with Victory!
Ai! Ai!

Act III. Scene I.

J. N. PATON, DEL. ET SC.

PLATE IX.

ACT III. SCENE II.

The mouth of a great River in the island Atlantis. OCEAN *is discovered reclining near the shore;*
APOLLO *stands beside him.*

OCEAN.

He fell, thou sayest, beneath the conqueror's frown?

APOLLO.

Ay! when the strife was ended, which made dim
The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven
With sanguine light, through the thick ragged skirts
Of the victorious darkness as he fell;
Like the last glare of day's red agony,
Which, from a rent among the fiery clouds,
Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled deep.

Act III. Scene II.

J. N. PATON DELt ET SC.

PLATE X.

ACT III. SCENE II.

Behold the Nereids under the green sea.
Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-like stream,
Their white arms lifted o'er their streaming hair,
With garlands pied and starry sea-flower crowns,
Hastening to grace their mighty sister's joy.

Act III. Scene II.

J.N. PATON. DEL. ET SC.

PLATE XI.

ACT III. SCENE IV.

A Forest. In the background a Cave. PROMETHEUS, ASIA, PANTHEA, IONE, *and the* SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.

IONE.

Sister, it is not earthly; how it glides
Under the leaves! how on its head there burns
A light, like a green star, whose emerald beams
Are twined with its fair hair! how, as it moves,
The splendour drops in flakes upon the grass!
Knowest thou it?

PANTHEA.

It is the delicate Spirit
That guides the earth through heaven.

* * * * * *

THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH (*running to* ASIA).

Mother! dearest mother!
May I then talk with thee as I was wont?
May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms,
After thy looks have made them tired of joy?
May I then play beside thee the long noons,
When work is none in the bright silent air?

ASIA.

I love thee, gentlest being, and henceforth
Can cherish thee unenvied. Speak, I pray:
Thy simple talk once solaced, now delights.

Act III. Scene IV

J.N. PATON. DEL: ET SC.

PLATE XII.

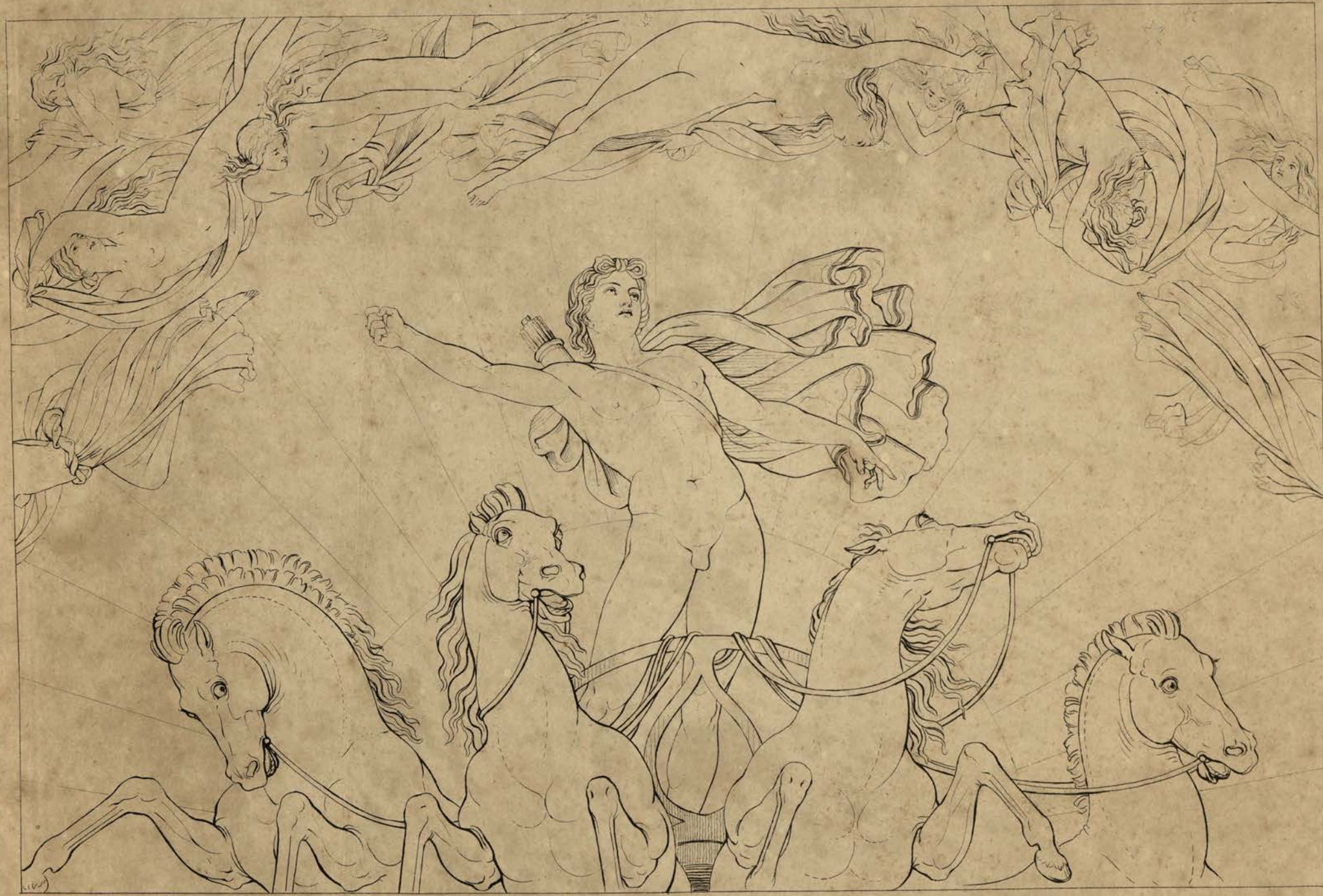
ACT IV.

The pale stars are gone!
For the sun, their swift shepherd,
To their folds them compelling
In the depths of the dawn,
Hastens, in meteor-eclipsing array, and they flee
Beyond his blue dwelling
As fawns flee the leopard.
But where are ye?

* * * * *

Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart—from the last giddy hour
Of dead endurance—from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
These are the seals of that most firm assurance
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his length,
These are the spells by which to re assume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.
To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free:
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!



Act IV.

J.N. PATON DEL. ET SC.

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